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HISTORY OF THE
 155TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY
 1 JANUARY 1968 - 31 DECEMBER 1968

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

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ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT
HISTORY OF THE
155TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96297

1 JANUARY 1968 - 31 DECEMBER 1968

Written By
SP/4 ROYCE J. CAMPBELL
UNIT HISTORIAN

Approved by
BOBBY L. MOORE
Maj Inf
Commanding

FORWARD

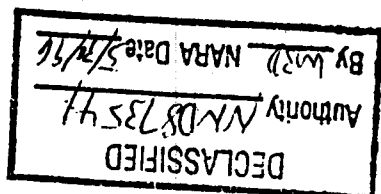
Serving as a combat support aviation unit in the Republic of Vietnam, the 155th Assault Helicopter Company, with its supporting detachments, is similar to the many other aviation units of the same size and structure. Formed originally as Company A, 1st Aviation Battalion, 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kansas, the unit arrived at Vung Tau, Vietnam on 1 May 1965. Bringing with them 24 UH-1D's, the company's advance party was welcomed to Ban Me Thuot by Lt. Col. Delbert Townsend, late commander of the 52nd Combat Aviation Battalion. After much preparation and many training hours, during which the men of Company A became proficient in the new and demanding techniques of flying in a combat zone, the company was declared operational 1 June 1965. On 20 November 1965 Company A was redesignated as the 155th Aviation Company (AML). Unofficially the 155th was directed by the 1st Aviation Brigade to designate itself the 155th Assault Helicopter Company. This designation is in effect for all Air Mobile Light companies throughout Vietnam.

From the first, however, the airlift platoons were known as the "Stage-coaches," while the armed platoon was called the "Falcons". Under these names the men of this proud company have spread their reputation for accomplishing their mission while maintaining the highest of safety standards and maintenance availability throughout the Republic of Vietnam. From Dong Ha in the north to Soc Trang in the south, from the fertile coast to the Cambodian border, they have flown over 75,000 hours in support of the allied forces combating the threat of Communism in South East Asia.

The 155th Compound, Camp Coryell at Ban Me Thuot, is looked upon by all

members of the unit with pride and pleasure. Kept in a high state of police and boasting modern and well equipped clubs, a theatre and volley ball courts. The 155th Assault Helicopter Company has been most fortunate in being able to establish good social and professional relations with the people of Ban Me Thuot. The men have been most cooperative in abiding with local laws and curfews. They have taken it upon themselves to control spending on the economy.

This history is dedicated to all those men who have served and are serving with the 155th Assault Helicopter Company and its detachments since its arrival in the Republic of Vietnam, with special tribute to those officers, warrant officers, and enlisted men who gave their lives in defense of their country.



IN MEMORIAM

1965

PFC MICHAEL E. DAVIS	21 OCT
WO JOSEPH S. HUYLER	21 OCT
SP5 WILLIAM J. JOHNSON	21 OCT
1LT HAROLD A. PREISENDEFER	21 OCT

1966

WO EUGENE W. CASWELL	27 MAY
WO MICHAEL N. CORYELL	30 NOV
PFC RICHARD E. DABNEY	27 MAY
WO RAYMOND L. FORD	29 MAR
PFC GREGORY L. MILLER	20 DEC
WO PHILLIP C. SMITH	29 MAR
PFC JAMES WALKER	30 NOV
WO WILMER J. WILLINGHAM	30 NOV
SP4 JOHN W. WOOD	30 NOV

1967

SGT KEITH D. GRIFFIN	16 MAR
WO TERRANCE A. NELSON	23 MAY
SP5 JAMES G. PATTERSON	16 MAR

1968

WO WILLIS W. SMITH	19 APR
1LT DENNIS E. PAINTER	19 APR
SP5 JANIS MICULUS	19 APR
SP4 FRANK L. FREEDIE	19 APR

1968

WO1 PAUL N. LARSON	19 APR
WO1 HERBERT HAYASHIDA	19 APR
SP4 JOHN H. BROOKS	19 APR
SP4 OREN B. MCCARDOL	19 APR
1LT FRED O. PRATT	26 AUG
WO1 MEDLICH S. KOPPEL	8 SEP
WO1 WILLIAM P. HARWOOD	8 SEP
WO1 RICHARD C. PUGH	28 DEC
SP4 JAMES D. BUDAHAZY	24 JUN
SP5 WILLIAM EISTER	6 FEB
SP4 EDWARD MILAN	4 MAR
SP4 JAMES SWANN	4 MAR
SSG ROBERT PINKSTON	13 MAR

...that these men shall not have died in vain.

PREFACE

Since 6 December 1968 it has been my privilege to command the 155th Assault Helicopter Company. The demonstrated flexibility of the aviation support and the far ranging missions impressed me. I find it even more satisfying to command a unit with such an evident display of esprit de corps and team effort by both officers and enlisted men of the company and its detachments. During the period of my command, this company has supported ground and air elements of United States and Republic of Vietnam units in the Central Highlands. It has been my pleasure to be a part of this hard working combat assault helicopter team.

It is my goal for the future that the 155th repeat the outstanding record it set in 1968. Company pilots, crews, and aircraft flew a maximum number of combat hours with outstanding maintenance support behind them, and have produced one of the finest unit safety records in Vietnam. The men of each supporting unit contributed to the overall flight record of the company and made real history for the past year. Individually, they deserve special commendation for their participation and sacrifices in the full year's efforts of 1968.

It is my privilege to write this preface to the 155th's unit history for 1968. The unit history which began a good many flying hours and DEROS dates ago at Fort Riley, Kansas, and which is being made daily here in Vietnam is in keeping with the highest traditions of Army Aviation and the United States Army.

Bobby L. Moore
BOBBY L. MOORE
Major, Infantry
Commanding

PART I
MISSION AND RESCUES

MISSION

The mission of the 155th Assault Helicopter Company is (1) to provide tactical air movement of combat troops in airmobile operations, (2) to provide tactical air movement of combat supplies and equipment within the combat zone, and (3) to provide combat assault support to combat troops.

ORGANIZATION

The 155th Assault Helicopter Company is organized under TOE 1-77G and has the following units attached:

- 165th Transportation Detachment (CHFM)
- 8th Medical Detachment
- 208th Signal Detachment (RADREP) (AVIONICS)
- 255th Quartermaster Detachment (KD) POL
- 348th Aviation Support Detachment

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

TERRAIN

The II Corps Tactical Zone, in which Ban Me Thuot is located and in which the 155th Assault Helicopter Company renders the majority of its support, covers an area of 32,725 square miles or 49% of the land area of South Vietnam. Its western border is 342 miles long and in common with Laos and Cambodia. The eastern border is approximately 400 miles of coastline bordering the South China Sea. The area is 400 miles of coastline bordering on the South China Sea. The area is 40 miles wide in the north and 342 miles wide in the south. This area is politically divided into the provinces of Kontum, Binh Dinh, Pleiku, Phu Bon, and Phu Yen in the 22nd ARVN Division Tactical Zone, and Darlac, Khanh Hoa, Quang Duc, Tuyen Duc, Ninh Thuan, Lam Dong, and Binh Thuan in the 23rd ARVN Division Tactical Zone. Geographically, this area may be divided into three major areas.

1. The coastal plain is a narrow strip of long flat, often marshy terrain not more than twenty miles wide from the sea inland. This area is formed by a series of numerous river deltas interrupted by a rocky ridge line running steeply to the sea. This area is almost entirely under cultivation, with four rice crops a year.

(2) The mountain region extends from north to south almost the entire length of the II Corps Tactical Zone. Elevations range from 3,000 to 8,000 feet, with the eastern slopes quite steep and the western more gradual. Rain forests cover three quarters of this area with most of the remainder covered with open, deciduous growth. Cultivation is limited to small, cleared areas on relatively flat land. Flying in this area is very hazardous with forced

landing areas practically non-existent, ceilings frequently very low and winds unpredictable.

3. The plateau region is located west of the mountains and is comprised of the Kontum Plateau in the north and the Darlac Plateau in the south. This region has altitudes ranging from 1,000 to 3,000 feet with gently rolling hills and much open area. Where the soil is not under cultivation, a thick growth of grass, to a height of eight to ten feet, covers the ground. Where adequate drainage is provided, this area will support four vegetable crops yearly.

The principal cities of this area are Phan Thiet, Phan Rang, Nha Trang, and Qui Nhon on the coastal plain; Dalat in the mountains; and Ban Me Thuot, Pleiku, and Kontum on the plateaus. The major routes of this area are:

Route #1 Saigon - Danang (coastal route)

Route #11 Dalat - Phan Rang

Route #14 Saigon - Ban Me Thuot - Pleiku - Kontum

Route #19 Pleiku - Qui Nhon

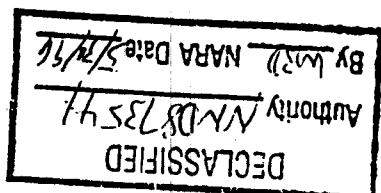
Route #20 Saigon - Dalat

Route #21 Ban Me Thuot - Nha Trang

The Republic's major rail line parallels Route #1 along its entire length with one spur line from Phan Rang to Dalat. The logistical and communications complex at Cam Ranh Bay is located between Phan Rang and Nha Trang.

WEATHER

Weather throughout this area can be divided into the summer monsoon, June through September, and the winter monsoon, November through April, with the months of May and October as periods of transition. During the summer monsoon the wind is southwesterly, causing cloud buildups on the western slopes of the mountains. This results in a rainy season for the plateaus and mountainous areas during the summer months while the coastal provinces have clear skies and



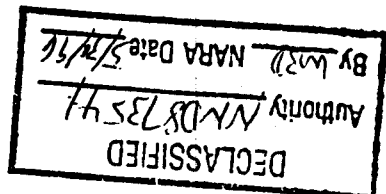
good flying weather. The winter monsoon brings a northeasterly flow with the conditions reversed. The coastal provinces of Binh Thuan and Nhai Thuan are little affected by either monsoon and have generally clear weather the year round.

Average rainfall in the mountain and plateau areas is 90 inches, and on the coastal plain 87 inches. The temperature on the coastal plain ranges from the mid 70's to the high 80's during the rainy season and low 80's to high 90's during the dry season. The mountains and plateaus experience temperatures from the mid 60's to mid 80's during the wet season, and low 60's to low 80's during the dry season. Winds are normally gusty at 10-15 knots with velocity increasing with altitude. Surface winds up to 25 knots are frequently encountered.

INDIGENOUS POPULATION

The II Corps Tactical Zone has a population of approximately 2.5 million people, or just over 20% of the population of the Republic of Vietnam. The majority of this population is located along the coastal plain in the vicinity of the cities. The majority of these people are Annamese.

The mountain and plateau regions are inhabited chiefly by Montagnard tribesmen. There are thirty-nine major tribes and some 150 subordinate tribal groups of these people living in the highlands of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Ban Me Thuot is the traditional capital of these people. The II Corps Area is inhabited by approximately 500,000 Montagnards. The largest tribe in this region is the Rade, whose influence extends from Kontum to Ban Me Thuot.



PART II
SIGNIFICANT EVENTS AND OPERATIONS

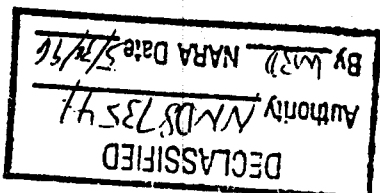
PERIOD 1 JANUARY - 31 MARCH

General:

The morale of the members of the 155th Assault Helicopter Company and its supporting detachments at Camp Corvett, Ban Me Thuet, has been exceptionally high as evidenced during the last two days of January. This was the beginning of the Vietnamese Tet holiday season, and along with the holiday season came a constant series of attacks on Camp Corvett. Both the officers and enlisted men worked around the clock to counteract these attacks and to defend the airfield. Since the compound is composed primarily of aviation units, there was much to be learned about ground combat operations. Each man was willing to learn and continued to do so with very little rest during the period. High morale and individual aggressiveness were contributing factors to the overall success of the defense of the 155th Assault Helicopter Company and its supporting detachments. The "Stagecoachers" proved themselves to be effective Infantrymen as well as exemplary aviators.

The Stagecoachers celebrated New Years Day with a stand-down in recognition of the unit's outstanding safety record. It was a quiet beginning to what was to become a hectic period for the 155th.

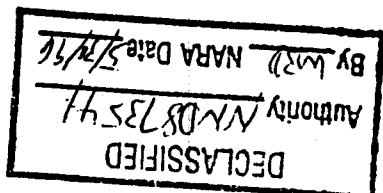
At 0215 on the 4th of January 1968, Camp Corvett was again attacked with 82mm mortars, and ground elements firing B-40 rockets. Fortunately no casualties were suffered on the compound, but some 46 rounds of hostile fire destroyed two UH-1H helicopters, and damaged ten other UH-1H helicopters. Additionally two transient Dustoff ships also incurred damage while parked



overnight in the corral. Several buildings and vehicles were damaged or destroyed. The company had been poised in readiness to support Operation Thien Bo on 5 January 1968. With a fair amount of the damage inflicted by this attack, so that the 155th had sufficient mission ready aircraft to support this operation on 6 January 1968. Both the 165th Transportation Detachment and the 155th Service Platoon again proved their responsiveness and ability in meeting this challenge with a superior maintenance effort.

On 6 January 1968, the company conducted its largest combat assault in several months of operation. Eleven lift helicopters of the 155th and five aircraft from the 92nd Assault Helicopter Company provided the assault ships for this lift; which was in conjunction with Operation Thien Bo 1/68, a joint 23rd ARVN Division and 24th Ranger Group Operation. Five Falcon UH-1C's were utilized for landing zone pre-strike along with Vietnamese Air Force A-1E's. The gunships provided suppressive fire and continuous air cover for the air assault operation. A total of 850 troops of the 11th and 22nd Ranger Battalions were lifted in 240 sorties.

An additional 190 troops from the 1/45 regiment were lifted from Ban Bleck into another one-ship landing zone which was to be set up as a Fire Support Base. The Pathfinder Detachment worked for several hours clearing this landing zone so that four CH-47's from the 190th Assault Support Helicopter Company could airlift four tubes of 105 Howitzers along with necessary ammunition and supplies to establish this base. The 155th Service Platoon provided refueling facilities at both pickup zones to support the operation. The entire mission was accomplished on time and without incident.



For the duration of Operation Thien Bo 1/68 from 6 January 1968 through 13 January 1968, the 155th provided a daily complement of five UH-1H and two UH-1C helicopters. These aircraft provided the ground commander with a responsive and flexible airmobile force which was employed to take maximum advantage of the tactical situation as it developed.

On 11 January 1968 the company extracted the Fire Support Base which had been established on 6 January. This was accomplished with eight lift helicopters escorted by four armed gunships. Four CH-47 Chinooks were again attached to lift the artillery and heavy equipment. A total of 90 aircraft sorties were flown without incident.

Five lift helicopters accompanied by a light gun team extracted 140 troops of the 23rd ARVN Division on 13 January 1968. This mission was successfully completed in 85 sorties.

Also on 13 January 1968, six UH-1H and two UH-1C helicopters of the company returned to Dak To and extracted a 4th Infantry Division Fire Support Base. In 85 sorties, some 450 troops were lifted without difficulty.

On 17 January 1968 at 0125 hours, Camp Conwell was again subjected to an enemy mortar attack. A total of 26 rounds fell in or adjacent to the compound. There were no US casualties, however five UH-1H helicopters received light to moderate damage. Three transient aircraft of the 92nd Assault Helicopter Company were also damaged along with the 165th Maintenance office and orderly room.

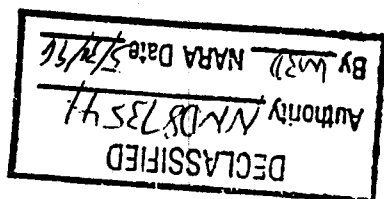
The intensive attack on Ban Mo Thuot and the adjacent airfield began on 30 January 1968 at 0150 hours. At this time both flare and gunships were ordered airborne in support of various check points and outposts under attack. At 0200 hours the 155th went to 100% alert, and at 0250 hours approximately

20 rounds of hostile mortar fire fell on the city airfield complex. Small arms fire was encountered throughout the night. Eight aircraft were damaged by hostile fire. The Falcon gunships not yet committed were ordered aloft at 0300 hours. They were later credited with destroying two enemy 82-mm mortar positions. Flare and gunships flew throughout the night in support of Darlac Sector and the 23rd ARVN Division.

At 0815 hours a Falcon aircraft piloted by WO1 Ian Lindsey and WO1 Lawrence Hanna was downed by hostile fire two miles south of Ban Me Thuot. A 165th recovery aircraft along with a Dustoff ship were dispatched to the scene, and several ships already in the air were diverted to the location to help defend the downed crew which had been forced to land in a highly insecure area. At 0830 hours, while taking off to direct recovery operations, Major Billy R. Goodall was wounded when his aircraft was engaged by hostile automatic weapons fire. The downed gunship crew was finally extracted at 0930 in the morning. Intense hostile activity precluded any attempt to recover the aircraft, and necessitated its destruction later in the day. While returning from the crash scene, the 165th Recovery aircraft was credited with 15 KIA's when its door gunners engaged a VC force caught in the open.

At 1300 hours another UH-1C was damaged and the crew chief wounded by enemy anti-aircraft fire. The aircraft completed its fire mission and then returned to home station for repairs. While landing on the city airfield at 1830 hours, WO1 Taaford received facial wounds when his UH-1H aircraft was hit by automatic weapons fire.

From 2300 hours 30 January 1968 to 0600 hours 31 January 1968 the Falcon gunships gave continual support to the 23rd ARVN Infantry Division in the Ban Me Thuot vicinity. During this time these two UH-1C's sustained 32 hits from



hostile fire. They were credited with silencing two enemy machine guns.

At 1600 the water pumping station southeast of the compound was lost to the Viet Cong, and 155th personnel were withdrawn from that location. Another mortar attack hit the compound at 1820, but resulted in negligible damage.

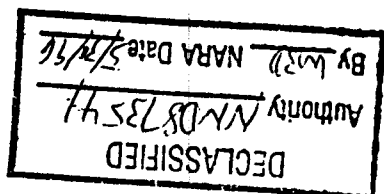
On 1 February 1968 at 0210 Camp Coryell came under attack by mortar fire. Twenty rounds fell within the limits of the compound causing six casualties two of which required MEDEVAC. Five aircraft damage to several structures was also incurred. Compound defense consisted of small arms, defensive 81mm mortar concentrations, and flare and gunships.

On 2 February 1968 at 0310 approximately 25 mortar rounds fell on the Camp Coryell compound. There were no casualties as most of the personnel were already in bunkers. Gun and flare ships were used in defense of the area. Aircraft damage included two UH-1H and one UH-1C heavily damaged and three UH-1H moderately damage.

Also on 2 February 1968 at 1400 hours a combat assault departed Ban Me Thuot City airstrip. The flight of six UH-1H lift ships was led by 1LT Jerry Daniels and gunship cover was provided by two Air Force gunships from East Field. The mission was in support of an element of the 503rd INF and consisted of moving in a force to secure an area south of Ban Me Thuot to be used as a fire base. The mission was accomplished without incident.

On 4 February 1968 we flew a combat assault in support of one Battalion of the 173rd Airborne. 1LT Rutledge led a flight of six UH-1H and two UH-1C's. Two maneuver companies were successfully moved from the field to a fire base for further deployment.

On 5 February 1968 at 0150 hours approximately 20 mortar rounds fell on



the Camp Corwell compound. Personnel on the compound were on alert and in bunkers and no casualties were incurred. Aircraft damage included one UH-1H with moderate damage and one UH-1H with light damage.

Another attack took place at 2240 hours when thirty mortar rounds fell in the aircraft parking area and cantonment area. Eight casualties were incurred during this attack, all sustained by personnel making their way to their bunkers. Gunships and a flare ship were again employed in defense of the compound.

The second week of February was one of rebuilding and recovering from the Tet attack. Maintenance personnel worked feverishly to repair battle damage to aircraft and vehicles. Compound personnel worked along with PA&E employees to restore electricity, water supply and sanitation services, as well as improving the defense posture and perimeter fortifications.

During the night of 14 February, two Falcon gunships were dispatched in response to a request from the 503rd INF Fire Support Base for air support to assist in repulsing an attack on their location. These two gunships flew 40 sorties from 0130 to 0400 hours and were credited with 15 KBA. As a token of appreciation the crews were later presented a B-40 rocket launcher and a light machinegun captured in this action. These war trophies are now on display in the Officer's Club.

On 17 February, eight lift ships escorted by a light gun team, flew 124 combat sorties in support of the Phu Bon Province Senior Advisor. Over 240 troops and nine tons of cargo were heli-lifted in this operation, without mishap.

Elements of the 155th deployed to Qui Nhon on 19 February to support the 22nd ARVN Division. In 35 sorties some 197 troops were inserted and later

the same day extracted to their staging area at Bagi Airfield. The following day another similar combat assault was conducted and successfully completed.

The Company suffered its first mortar attack since Tet period at 0115 hours 23 February 1968. An estimated 53 rounds of enemy 82mm mortar fire were received, causing minor damage to several aircraft. There were no casualties and no damages to structures or equipment other than the helicopters.

The 2nd Airlift Platoon accomplished a combat assault for the 22nd ARVN Division accompanied by two UH-1C gunships at Tuy Hoa on 23 February. This mission was accomplished utilizing five UH-1C helicopters to airlift the 180 troops involved. It was completed in 78 sorties without incident.

On 26 February the Falcons were credited with 10 enemy KBA and 5 military structures destroyed when they exploited intelligence from the Darlac RDC office on hostile location in the local areas. The local RDC/PRU teams have afforded us some highly useful and reliable intelligence.

The 2nd of March found five slicks and two guns back at Cheo Reo for an insertion of 215 troops in 75 sorties. These troops were extracted from a pick up area on 4 March and returned to the Cheo Reo airstrip.

At 0350 hours 4 March 1968, the Camp Coryell compound was again subjected to an enemy 82mm mortar attack. A total of 86 rounds fell on the compound during the nightlong attack in which B-40 rockets and bangalore torpedoes were employed to breach our perimeter. A satchel charge team infiltrated through the R&U yard, killing a Korean P&E employee, but they were repelled by a reaction force. Other attempts by hostile elements to penetrate our perimeter proved futile, and NVN casualties were eight KIA by body count along with an unknown number of wounded. Numerous weapons and items of equipment were captured. The 155th suffered two fatal casualties, both assigned to

Detachment 10, 5th Weather Squadron which was attached to the company at that time. The 185th Recon Airplane Company also lost one enlisted member in the attack. Additionally some 31 personnel on the compound were wounded, 15 of which were serious enough to warrant aeromedical evacuation. Since the mortar rounds were directed at the cantonment area, there was no aircraft damage, however numerous structures and vehicles were damaged or destroyed.

On the afternoon of 4 March, while hovering out of the revetments, a UH-1H meshed main rotor blades with an adjacent helicopter, causing major damage to both aircraft along with a third aircraft which was struck by flying debris. One pilot required medical evacuation for head injuries.

The company conducted an Eagle Flight in the Chao Reo area on 10 March for the Senior Adviser of Phu Ben Province. 186 PF troops were airlifted in 54 sorties.

On 13 March at 2220 hours the 155th Assault Helicopter Company compound was again attacked by a hostile force employing 82mm mortars. An estimated 81 rounds were fired in four separate barrages. There were twenty WIA on the compound and one of the unit's NCO's was killed as a result of this action. Again no aircraft were damaged since the rounds all fell in the cantonment area. Major Billy R. Goodall, 155th Commanding Officer was wounded in both legs and required medical attention resulting in his ultimate evacuation to CONUS. He was replaced by Major Walter Urbach, Jr. formerly Executive Officer, who assumed command.

On 16 March eight UH-1H and two UH-1C helicopters supported ARVN elements at Chao Reo. In a combat assault 128 troops were inserted in 26 aircraft sorties. The following day some 209 troops were extracted by company aircraft in 54 combat sorties without incident.

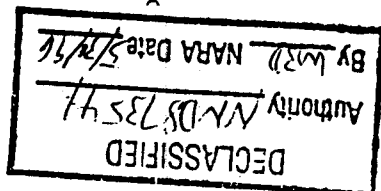
Elements of the unit displaced to Bao Loc on 18 March to conduct a combat assault for the Lam Dong Sector Advisory Team. Some 180 PF troops were heli-lifted in 28 sorties, and the mission was successfully accomplished despite the marginal weather.

The 1st Platoon of the 155th supported B-23 Special Forces Detachment on 19 March in the vicinity of Ban Me Thuot. In an operation conducted against the 32nd NVA Regiment, 260 CIDG forces were airlifted in 42 sorties.

On 22 March the 2nd Airlift Platoon flew to Song Cau on the coast to conduct an airmobile mission for the Phu Yen Province Advisory Team. 190 PF troops were lifted in 30 sorties.

The 24th of March was a full day for the company. The 2nd flight platoon left early in the morning for Cheo Reo where they lifted 486 troops with seven UH-1H helicopters, logging 104 combat assault sorties in very hazy weather. They returned to Ban Me Thuot and during the afternoon flew in support of Special Forces Detachment B-23, airlifting 138 CIDG troops in 14 sorties. Meanwhile the 1st Platoon conducted a combat assault for the 23rd ARVN Division. Five slicks and four gunships were employed to heli-lift 170 ARVN infantrymen in 60 aircraft sorties.

The company again exerted a maximum effort on 25 March which was to be a long and memorable day. Five aircraft of the 1st Platoon and two Falcons departed before dawn for Kontum to stage a combat assault for ARVN units in that area, lifting 198 troops in 24 sorties. Upon return, they were joined by 3 additional slicks and 2 gunships, and dispatched to Ban Don to support Special Forces Mobile Strike Force elements in contact with the 32nd NVA Regimental HQ. In a valiant action, the company lifted 185 CIDG reinforcements into a insecure LZ while under heavy fire, and then returned to provide



ammunition and medical supplies and evacuate wounded. During this action CPT Robert A. Albracht, Operations Officer, employed his C-47 aircraft to make low level gun runs over the enemy position in response to an urgent request by overwhelmed allied forces for air support. For their valorous acts both CPT Albracht and his crew were subsequently recommended for decorations by Special Forces observers.

Upon the completion of this mission, all aircraft diverted to Duc Lap in response to a tactical emergency declared by Special Forces and CIDG elements there who were under enemy contact. A total of 106 CIDG troops were airlifted in 11 sorties. During this action CW2 James Goss of the 155th distinguished himself by valorous deeds and was recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross.

In a separate action on this date, two UH-1C gunships, again acting on current intelligence reports with local RDC advisors, struck at a suspected NVA medical facility south of Ban Me Thuet. They were credited with 7 KBA and 12 WIA in this action.

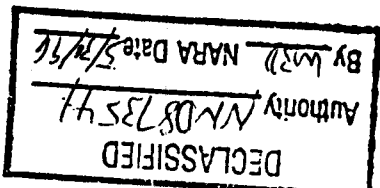
On 26 March 6 UH-1H and 2 UH-1C aircraft provided Army Aviation support for the Phu Bon Province MCV Team. Flying 42 sorties out of Cheo Reo airfield they lifted 281 troops and 2400 pounds of cargo in a combat assault. The Falcon gunships were credited with 10 enemy KBA and 5 structures destroyed in this operation.

On 28 and 29 March company aircraft lifted 507 troops out of Cheo Reo for the Phu Bon Province Team. A total of 140 combat sorties were logged without incident.

PERIOD 1 APRIL - 30 JUNE

Increased command emphasis on military courtesy and discipline, coupled with a sincere interest in the welfare of the men proved invaluable in improving the attitude of the members of the unit. During this time period specific results were noted in the interest the men displayed in their work and their demonstrated desire to do a good job. The company's outstanding record of mission accomplishments continued throughout the quarter. This success is attributable in large part to the identification each man now feels with the unit and his personal pride in its accomplishments. During the quarter, the company experienced almost a complete turnover in its key personnel.

On 6 April, two Falcon UH-1C aircraft were credited with 4 hostile KBA in the vicinity of Dalat. One gunship was hit by enemy automatic weapons fire



but completed its mission and returned home.

Working with various intelligence agencies on 7 April, the company conducted a combat assault east of Ban Me Thuot. The mission was designed to liberate a group of Montagnards and two Americans from a VC prison camp. Details and results of this operation remain classified.

During the evening of 7 April the company staged a night combat assault in the local area for self-defense purposes. Working with Detachment B-23, Special Forces, 110 CIDG troops were airlifted from East Field into an LZ controlled by 52nd CAB Pathfinders. The success of this mission proved the concept feasible in the event of a suspected or actual enemy attack on the installation.

The 1st Platoon flew to Cheo Reo on 8 April with 6 slicks and 2 guns to support the 22nd ARVN Division. They lifted 377 infantrymen in 104 sorties. During this action the Falcons were credited with 3 enemy KBA and the destruction of two military structures.

Another combat assault was flown out of Cheo Reo on 11 April for the MACV team there. In 38 sorties, 250 PF troops were inserted, and then extracted the following day in an additional 56 aircraft sorties. During the action on 11 April a light gun team from the Armed Platoon was given credit for 4 VC kills.

Following the Cheo Reo extraction on the 12th of April, the 1st Airlift Platoon deployed to Tuy An where a combat assault was flown in support of the 22nd ARVN Division. Some 252 troops were airlifted in the insertion phase, and later extracted for a total of 106 sorties. Upon completion of this mission an additional 529 troops were airlifted in a combat assault for the Phu Yen Province Senior Adviser.

Cheo Reo was again the staging area for a combat assault on 18 April. Flying for the Phu Ben Province MACV Advisory Team, elements of the 155th heli-lifted 368 troops in 128 sorties. The gunships destroyed 16 enemy structures along with 8 pack animals.

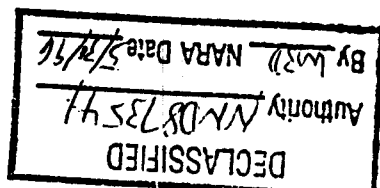
Perhaps the worst tragedy in the history of the company occurred on 19 April when two UH-1H helicopters collided in mid-air while flying formation during a combat assault. All personnel aboard both aircraft were killed. Four officer aviators and four enlisted crewmembers from the 155th lost their lives in this unexplained accident, along with 18 Vietnamese military passengers.

On 20 April elements of the company again supported the Phu Ben Province Team. Flying out of Cheo Reo, five UH-1H aircraft lifted 235 troops in 84 sorties.

Nine company helicopters flew to Tuy Hoa on 24 April and provided a massive airlift for the ARVN 3/47th and 4/37th Regiments in conjunction with VNAF CH-34 aircraft. Despite the low overcast weather, 1040 troops were airlifted in 156 sorties.

During the night of 26 April Camp Coryell was subjected to an enemy mortar attack, breaking the six week interlude since the last of such actions. A total of 45 rounds fell within the compound, damaging seven helicopters and scores of vehicles assigned to the 70th Engineer Company. There were 16 minor casualties.

Throughout the month of May the 155th conducted "out of local area" missions in support of the 22nd and 23rd ARVN Divisions. In support of these divisions, the 155th flew company and platoon size missions in Phu Ben, Pleiku, Phu Yen, Lam Dong, Kontum, Ninh Thuan, Tuyen Duc, Binh Dinh, and



Darlac provinces. In addition to this support to the ARVN Divisions the company provided daily sector aircraft to Quan Duc and Darlac Sectors and flew more than 15 platoon size combat assaults for the 5th Special Forces. The month of May afforded 43 combat assaults out of the local area. May also brought a rash of enemy attacks on Camp Coryell and Ban Me Thuot.

At 0250 hours on 5 May, 5 rounds of a 60 round 82mm mortar attack resulted in five aircraft being damaged and one man being inflicted with a head wound. Four UH-1C gunships were airborne at the time of the attack and took the hostile locations under fire scoring credit for 27 KBA and 12 mortar tubes destroyed.

At 0140 hours on 15 May, ten 122mm rockets fell short of their mark of Camp Coryell. But at 0110 hours on 25 May a barrage of 15 122mm rockets resulted in seven aircraft damaged, one totally, and nine personnel injured. At 0240 on the following morning, 26 May, 16 rounds of 82mm mortars landed within the compound damaging 3 aircraft and 22 vehicles and destroying one generator and APU. Personnel suffered only 3 minor injuries.

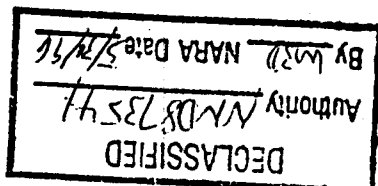
On 1 June the 155th received a warm welcome from the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion as, in accordance with paragraph 1, General Orders 38, Headquarters 17th Combat Aviation Group, dated 4 June 1968, the 155th was transferred to the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion from the 52nd Aviation Battalion. During this month of change-over the 155th found itself still working in an area from Dak To to Phan Thiet, flying 49 "out of local area" missions in support of the 22nd and 23rd ARVN Divisions and 5th Special Forces, moving 12,000 troops in direct support, hauling 92 tons of supplies and flying 1915 hours. One of the highlights of the month was a night combat assault of 500 troops in an area north of Ban Me Thuot with minimum lighting. The successful accomplishment of

this difficult task illustrated the 155th's ability to reinforce its immediate area at any time should Ban Me Thuot become a site of a major offensive.

During the early part of the month the 155th continued to draw the attention of "Charlies" mortar crews. On 4 June at 0130 the area of Camp Coryell inhabited by members of the 70th Engineer Battalion tragically drew eight rounds, causing extensive damage to the six tents the engineers called home. The rounds killed two and seriously wounded 12, eight of which had to be immediately evacuated.

At 0130 on 14 June, Camp Coryell came under its heaviest mortar attack. Eighty three 82mm and 62mm mortars were fired from approximately 500 meters north of Camp Coryell's northern perimeter resulting in over 41 hits within the confines of the perimeter. Although ten aircraft were damaged, two to the point of turn-in, the rounds evaded the hooch areas consequently there were no casualties.

Prior to the 15th of June the 155th AHC had experienced six attacks in six weeks. Beginning 15 June, one flare ship armed with a .50 caliber machine gun and 20 flares was sent aloft at various times each night. It is noteworthy that from 15 June to late August that only two attacks occurred. The first, a recoilless rifle attack, occurred as the flare ship was shutting down and the second, a mortar attack was conducted from a school yard on the edge of the city of Ban Me Thuot thus preventing the flare ship from returning effective fire. The 75mm recoilless rifle attack came at 0010 on 28 June. Consisting of fifteen rounds, it resulted in only two aircraft being moderately damaged.



PERIOD 1 JULY - 30 SEPTEMBER

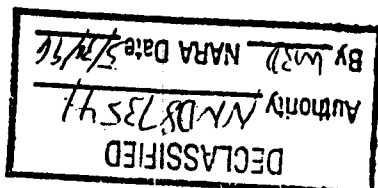
Morale steadily rose during this period and was at its highest level in months. Everyone adopted a positive "Can Do" attitude. Improvements in physical facilities and additional services provided for the troops were factors. The most significant improvement in physical facilities was in the unit mess hall. New field ranges, steam table, grill, deep fat fryer, and a cold food counter were obtained. The interior of the mess hall was renovated. These improvements coupled with a marked improvement in the quality of food preparation played a major role in raising morale. Double metal wall lockers were obtained for all personnel and a billets improvement program was initiated. The impact of transients was drastically reduced. Mail service was fair to good throughout the period.

The participation of the unit in the battle of Duc Lap added to the buildup of morale. The unit made a significant aviation contribution to the defeat of a large North Vietnamese Army force.

The first professional entertainment for the troops in approximately 9 months performed at Camp Coryell on 25, 26, and 27 October 1968. The show was well received by the troops.

Military courtesy and personal appearance improved considerably. This was due in part to strong emphasis by officers and NCO's and by a feeling of personal and unit pride instilled in the troops.

Frequent guard duty due to a shortage of personnel tended to have a detrimental effect on morale but was countered by allowing guards the morning off after their tour of duty. The high state of morale was reflected in the increased productivity of fewer personnel. A higher percentage of mission ready aircraft was maintained even though the number mechanics on hand was steadily decreased during the period.

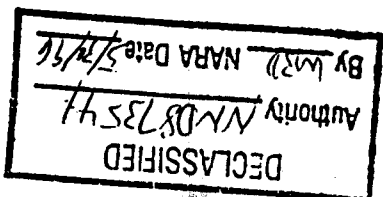


During the month of July the 155th Assault Helicopter Company conducted the majority of its activities in Darlac Province. Eleven platoon and two company sized combat assaults were flown in support of the 23rd ARVN Division while 15 platoon sized assaults were flown for elements of the 5th Special Forces. Due to Command and Staff efforts at Battalion level the 155th found itself outside the local area only 6 time during the month of July compared to 49 combat assaults performed out of the area in the month of June. The 155th has flown 9 APD missions during the past month for the 23rd ARVN Division and assisted elements in contact on 16 occasions with gunship support.

The companies aircraft availability rate changed from a low of 6 slicks and 4 guns to a high of 16 slicks and 5 guns during the month of July. This was due primarily to having a total of six aircraft in 11th FE during July. Availability began to pick up as aircraft came of 11th FE and was further assisted when two 1,000 hr plus aircraft were transferred to different companies within the battalion. During July the company received 2 UH-1C aircraft from the 361st and lost one UH-1C due to an engine failure.

With the coming of July the monsoon season finally arrived in the Central Highlands making early missions difficult if not often impossible. The local Viet Cong helped the installation celebrate the 4th of July with a small mortar attack which did little damage to the compound.

During the month of August the 155th Assault Helicopter Company gave the majority of its support to Special Forces units. The company conducted 17 platoon sized combat assaults were conducted in support of the 22nd and 23rd ARVN Divisions. During the past month over 30 APD missions were flown in the Ban Me Thuot and Duc Lan area which helped to locate several enemy base camps. The company's gunships were called out on 21 different occasions during



August to support both U.S. and ARVN Troops in contact.

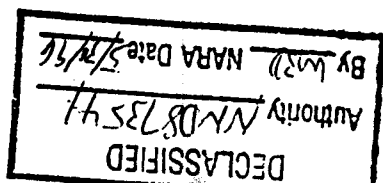
On 25 August the Special Forces and MLGV compounds at Duc Lap came under a heavy enemy attack from a large NVN force. The 155th supplied the majority of the aviation support for the first three days of the battle. This support cost 1 UH-1H and 1 UH-1C shot down by anti-aircraft fire and 10 additional ships hit during the first 3 days. With the 4 aircraft hit earlier in the month it brought the company total up to 16 aircraft hit by hostile fire for the month of August.

After 53 days without a hostile attack the company received a recoilless rifle attack on the 26th and then on the 31st of August 20 122mm rockets were fired at the company area. Only 6 rockets landed within the perimeter and damage was at a minimum.

The company continued to provide combat support to ARVN and U.S. Forces in the Ban Me Thuot area. The month was characterized by the beginning of the battle of Duc Lap and the organization of Task Force Spoiler. The company in addition to local support, accomplished major lifts in Qui Nhon and Cheo Reo. Combat support was given to various Special Forces units throughout the month.

On 19 August, while conducting a combat assault for B-23 Special Forces at Tieu Atar, a UH-1C received 2 rounds of ground fire. The armed helicopter sustained minor damage, however one crew member was seriously wounded.

At 0105 hours on 23 August, the battle of Duc Lap began. Again the company showed its rapid mobility by responding to an urgent request from the 23rd ARVN Division for armed helicopter support. The gunships were on station 30 minutes later. The company provided continuous armed helicopter support for the besieged camp throughout the night of 23 August. ⁽¹⁾ At 0700 hours on

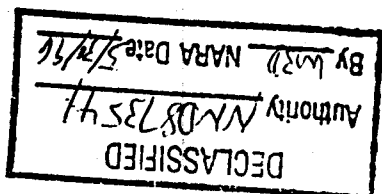


23 August, while engaging a hostile force, one of the armed gun team was shot down by enemy ground fire. Although one of the crew members incurred serious gunshot wounds, they fought their way to a friendly compound 100 meters away. Making the safety of the compound, the crew was evacuated by air later in the morning. During the morning of 23 August, the company provided 5 lift helicopters in an effort to re-inforce the beleaguered outposts. Under intense enemy ground and anti-aircraft fire, the combat assault continued airlifting forces into the area of the camp. Two armed helicopters from the company provided suppressive fire and continuous air cover for the air assault operations. 28 rounds of small arms, and anti-aircraft fire were received throughout the day.

Again on 24 August, the company provided 7 airlift helicopter and 2 armed helicopters for support of the besieged forces at Duc Lap. More re-inforcements were desperately needed to quell the attacking force. As the first wave of lift ships descended on final for the LZ enemy anti-aircraft gunners opened fire on the flight, sending one aircraft to the ground in flames. There were negative injuries to the crew, however 4 passengers perished in the burning wreckage. Within minutes, the crew was rescued and evacuated to Ban M₃ Thuot.

On 25 August, Task Force Spoiler was organized. The company provided a majority of its aircraft in support of this operation. Numerous assets within the 17th Combat Aviation Group were called upon to provide aircraft in support of Task Force Spoiler.

On 26 August, 2200 hours, Camp Cornwall was subjected to an enemy recoilless rifle attack. A total of 10 rounds fell on the compound. One warrant officer was slightly injured in the attack and 3 UH-1H helicopters received minor damage. There was negative facilities damaged.



The worst tragedy suffered thus far by the company in the battle of Duc Lap occurred on 27 August 1968. Two UH-1C helicopters were dispatched to Duc Lap to support the MACV Subsector which came under an intense enemy ground attack. As the light fire team rolled in for the attack, enemy gunners riddled the two aircraft with small arms fire. ^(A) Lt. Pratt, pilot on the trail aircraft was killed, while two other pilots suffered facial injuries. The two gunships, crippled as they were, managed to fly back to Ban Me Thuot. A properly worn chest protector can be credited for saving the life of Warrant Officer Brad Jones.

On 28 August, the company was honored by the request of 4 UH-1H helicopters to transport President Thieu, his staff and general party to Duc Lap. The operation was conducted without incident.

At 0245 hours, 31 August, Camp Coryell was again subjected to a 122mm rocket attack. A total of 20 rounds fell on or near the compound. Three enlisted men from the 135th Recon Airplane Company and two enlisted men from the 70th Engineers were wounded slightly and returned to duty. Two UH-1C and 2 UH-1H helicopters of the 4th Infantry Division received minor damage. One C.P. medium tent was destroyed.

On 8 September 1968, a helicopter returning to Ban Me Thuot from a sector mission suffered an engine failure and was forced to autorotate to a grassy field. There were no injuries to crew members or passengers. The most serious tragedy was yet to come. At 1100 hours, 8 September, on a return flight from Duc Lap the 23rd ARVN Division Senior Advisor's aircraft was forced to autorotate into dense jungle 2 miles north of Duc Lap. The aircraft exploded on impact with only two seriously injured crew members surviving the crash. General An, the 23rd ARVN Division Commander; and Colonel Sage, the 23rd ARVN

Division Commander; and Colonel Sage, the 23rd ARVN Division Senior Advisor; were listed among the deaths. The tragedy was felt by everyone in the Ban Me Thuot area.

(★) In the afternoon of 23 September, while flying on a combat assault in the Duc Lap area, a UH-1H was downed by enemy fire in the LZ. One aviator was slightly injured, as a result of mortar rounds falling on the LZ. The crew was not extracted until several hours later due to intense enemy ground fire. The aircraft was completely destroyed by fire.

On 23 September, the company was honored by Major Tan, commander of the 45th Regiment; in recognition of outstanding achievement provided his regiment during the battle of Duc Lap. Major Poole, the 155th AHC Commander received the appropriately inscribed plaque for the company.

On 30 September, while flying Darlac Sector, a UH-1H helicopter made a precautionary landing in a secure area. As the aircraft touched down, the engine failed. There was negative injury to crew or passengers.

Moral. During this period, morale was high. Consequently, the company did not have any discipline problems with discipline. Some of the factors contributing to the high morale were: A command emphasis on creating professional work. Aircraft Commanders were assigned individual aircraft, which improved the general condition and appearance of the aircraft. The improvement of recreational facilities on the compound to include frequent shows provided by the DCO Club at no extra charge.

The company continued to provide aircraft for Task Force Snodder and AAVN units. The month of October had shown a marked decrease in enemy activity. As a result, more of the company's aircraft are being utilized out of the province.

At 0220 hours, 4 October, Camp Corvett again came under a hostile attack. Forty rounds of 60mm mortar rounds and 4 B-40 rockets fall on or near the compound. One enlisted man from the 1st Airborne Company was slightly injured and returned to duty. The 15th Barr room and the 16th Barr room received minor damage. Three aircraft received minor damage. A sapper team consisting of two men took advantage of the incoming mortar and rocket rounds and infiltrated through the outer western perimeter. As the sapper team attempted cutting the inner fence, guards from post #5 heard a noise and fired a hand flare. Sighting the sapper team, they opened fire with M-60 machine guns. The sapper team disappeared into the underbrush.

On the afternoon of 30 October, 4 UH-1H's from the company were transporting refugees to Buon Bo. While en route final for the LZ a UH-1H lost power and crashed. None of the passengers were injured, however one of the crewmembers sustained serious injury. The aircraft was a total loss.

During the month of November 1968, the 155th Assault Helicopter Company continued to provide aircraft for several major troop lifts in the II Corp Tactical area. In addition, the company has provided aircraft for operations in Lam Dong, Khanh Hoa, Darlac, Quang Duc, Tuyeh Duc, and Phu Bon Provinces and for the 5th Special Forces.

At 2009, 12 November 1968, Camp Coryell came under hostile attack. Fifteen rounds of 75mm recoilless rifle fell on or near the compound. One enlisted man was slightly injured and air evacuated. Five aircraft received from light to heavy damage and five facilities received from light to moderate damage. The attack lasted from 2009 until 2040 hours.

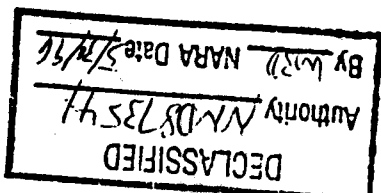
At 0215, 14 November 1968, Camp Coryell again came under hostile attack. Nineteen rounds of 82mm mortars fell on the compound. Four enlisted men from the 196th Assault Support Helicopter Company were seriously injured and air evacuated. Ten aircraft received light damage. In addition, six vehicles were damaged to a light extent. The attack lasted from 0215 until 0220 hours.

During the month of December the 155th Assault Helicopter Company flew air support throughout the II Corps Tactical Zone. The 155th conducted air assaults in Bu Prang, Choo Rco, Duc Lap and for the Duc My Rangers. The 155th also continued to fly tactical air support missions for the 23rd ARVN Division in the Ban Me Thuet area and throughout Darlac Province.

On the 6th and 13th of December the compound under attack by 82mm mortar. Negative damage was reported on both occasions.

On the 16th Camp Coryell again came under attack with 75mm recoilless rifles. Seven aircraft were damaged during the attack along with light damage to two buildings.

On 28 December 1968, ship #668 from 10th Battalion crashed just north of the compound completely demolishing the aircraft. Four personnel from the 155th were on board. Three required air evacuation and five killed.



ROSTER OF KEY PERSONNEL

As of 31 December 1968

155TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY

Company Headquarters

Moore, Bobby L.	MAJ	OF103380	INF	Company Commander
Harrison, Joe F.	CPT	05333142	SC	Executive Officer
Fearson, Robert K.	1LT	05336757	INF	Flt Ops Off
Erickson, Thomas	WO1	W3160158	AVN	Intel Off
Howell, William C.	WO1	W3201216	QMC	Supply Off
Creely, Ronald M.	1LT	05427135	AT	1st Plt Cmdr
Schreckengost, David	1LT	05426893	AT	2nd Plt Cmdr
Meadows, James L.	1LT	05426814	AT	3rd Plt Cmdr

Service Platoon

Butler, Gary R.	1LT	05256218	TC	Plat Cmdr
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165th Trans Det

Lomax, John B.	1LT	05341096	TC	Det Cmdr
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8th Med Det

Blair, Herbert	CPT	05542473	MC	Det Cmdr
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208th Signal Det

Todd, Stuart A.	CW2	W3201019	SC	Det Cmdr
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PART III

STATISTICS

155TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1 JANUARY 1968 - 31 DECEMBER 1968

Combat Hours Flown	23,263
Combat Sorties	95,131
Total Passengers	122,186
Total Cargo	2,287
KBA	283